

# Interim Legislative Funding Committee

1. Good Afternoon

I am Bob Moore, Superintendent of Stevensville Public School.

I am also chairman elect of the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative.

2. The board of directors of the Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative has discussed our resolution and we are committed to the principal listed in the resolution.

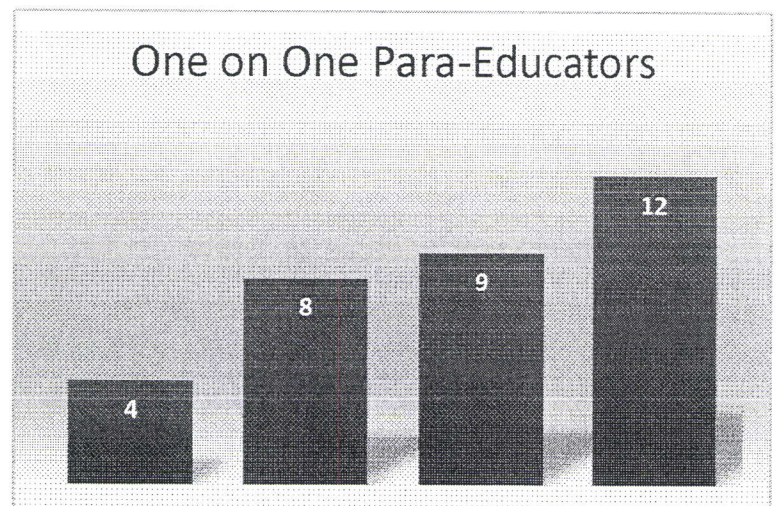
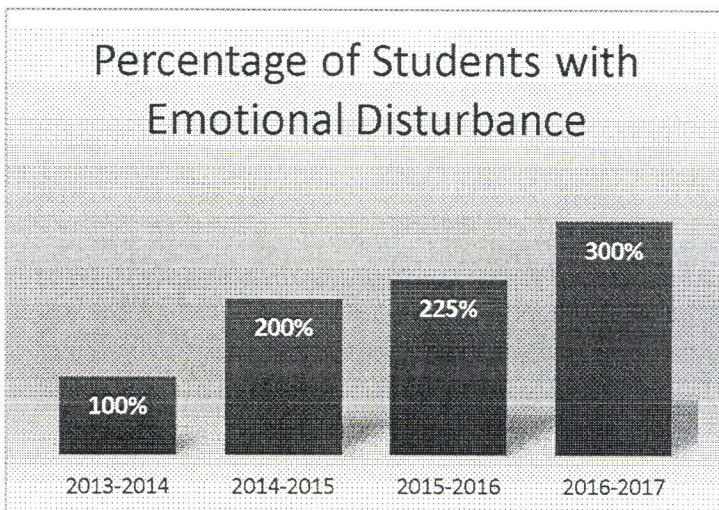
- a. We are committed to providing a free and appropriate public education for all students.
- b. We are finding the inadequate state funding for special education services is negatively impacting the education of all students by decreasing general fund dollars available to general education programming.
- c. This is especially true in rural areas where we rely on cooperative services.

3. Stevensville is a prime example of this problem.

- a. We are experiencing increasing rates of special needs population students.
- b. Many of these students require disproportionate services which requires Stevensville to divert general fund dollars.

i.	2013-2014	104 Students	12 CSCT/Emotional disturbed	4 one/one
ii.	2014-2015	103 Students	16 CSCT/Emotional disturbed	8 one/one
iii.	2015-2016	126 Students	18 CSCT/Emotional disturbed	9 one/one
iv.	2016-2017	115 students	27 CSCT/Emotional disturbed	12 one/one

\*One on One numbers indicate a teacher or Para-educator with the student 50% - 100% of the day.



- c. Currently I have a need for two additional full-time, one-on-one para-educators for new students in my district. This is at a time when we are seeing only limited increases in funding. In short, I am making general education cuts to fund these two positions.
  - d. In addition, I have had to cut one special education teaching position at the high school due to declining budgets. This cut comes at a time when our special education population is growing.
- 4. Because we have no predictability in special education funding, it is virtually impossible to budget and the lack of inflationary increases has placed the increasing burden on the general education budget funding.
  - 5. In closing, I ask that the committee support permanent and predictable increases with inflationary adjustments for special education in Montana.